



Jan Patrick Heiss

Musa

An essay (or experiment)
in the anthropology of the individual

Anthropology, Existence and Individuals, Volume 2

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Anthropology does not usually select a person and try to empirically research, describe, analyse and explain their present life. However, this is the main objective pursued in this book. The field subject who becomes a theme in it is Musa, a Hausa peasant from Niger. This study thus provides an account of his present life and tries to explain it by drawing on the literature on peasants and on Islam in the region. This book also tries to show that the study of individuals »as such« is a topic for anthropology which deserves more attention. It argues that anthropology could benefit from an explicit discussion of the notion of the individual by providing more differentiated accounts of individuals as it tries to contribute to a development of an appropriate notion of the individual for anthropology. Furthermore, it makes the point that the study of individuals contributes to a better understanding of the interrelationship between different social fields, e.g. religion and economy.

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